

Connecting our Students, Alumni and Communities Worldwide

CALS Connection

College of Agricultural and Life Sciences
IFAS at the University of Florida



Volume 2, May 2002

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Opportunities Expand and Successes Grow

As this academic year comes to a close, it's the perfect time to reflect on the college's accomplishments in 2001-2002 and to share our achievements with you.

Since you last heard from us in the inaugural edition of this newsletter in 2001, we've been working hard to provide new opportunities for everyone affiliated with the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences – our faculty, staff, alumni and, most important, our students. Offering them hands-on experience, from participating in undergraduate research or extension internships to studying abroad, continues to be one of our primary goals.

Five seniors and one graduate student in the college's agricultural communication program recently gained practical reporting experience when they wrote stories for *CALS Connection*.

Peruse Keyatta Shade's article, which focuses on undergraduate internships, then learn about the important roles student organizations play in the college in a story by Steven Lands. Read on as Kelli Dunn describes the challenges of recruiting for a college as diverse as ours, and Rebecca Ambrose sheds light on the responsibilities and leadership opportunities of the CALS Ambassadors program. Finally, Emily Eubanks covers some events sponsored by the college, including its premier alumni event, Tailgator, and Aimee Huskey reports on the growth of the IFAS Graduate Research Symposium.

The students benefited from the opportunity, and we in turn have the chance to enjoy their fresh perspectives.

Faculty members continue to support these and other hands-on learning activities. In this issue, Mickie Swisher, the college's globalization coordinator, documents her experience leading a group of students on an international study tour in Costa Rica. Katie Sieving, the honors coordinator for the college, discusses the strength and growth of the upper division honors program.

Our faculty are the key to providing the excellent education we offer. Recognition by the United States Department of Agriculture, the University of Florida and Blue Key attests to the high quality of teaching and advising found in our college.

Our students also continue to amaze us. In the past year, they increasingly participated in and conducted leadership programs here at the University of Florida and across the country. Their recognitions, detailed throughout this publication, reflect a wide range of achievements.

One of the most important and visible measures of success for the college is the accomplishments of our graduates. Three alumni featured in this issue took three different paths to success. Mortimer H. Neufville is executive vice president of the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges. Betsy Gardner owns The Plant Shoppe at Greenery Square in Gainesville, while Guillermo Palacios directs the Agricultural School of El Hogar in Honduras.

Many alumni have responded to our request for updated information. We encourage all alumni to connect with us by completing the form on page 5.

As you read the second edition of *CALS Connection*, we believe you will share our sense of pride in the college and in the strength of our students, alumni, faculty and staff.



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UNIVERSITY OF
FLORIDA

Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

Message From The Dean



Jimmy G. Cheek, dean,
College of Agricultural
and Life Sciences

The 2001-2002 academic year has been another exceptionally productive year for the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences. This year we had 860 graduate students, a record number for CALS. Undergraduate enrollment was approximately 3,000 students. Nationally, CALS ranks seventh at the undergraduate level and fifth at the graduate level in student body size. Nationally, we produced the fifth largest number of bachelor's degrees, fourth largest number of master's degrees, and fifth largest number of doctoral degrees. Our faculty increased graduate student credit hours taught by almost 10 percent and undergraduate student credit hours taught by more than 8 percent.

A major strength of CALS is the highly productive and dedicated faculty and staff who are committed to excellence in teaching and advising, undergraduate and graduate education, student diversity, and enhancing the quality of the educational experiences for students in CALS. Our students continually tell me about the high regard they have for our faculty and staff. The students praise our teaching and advising, as well as the rigorous and relevant curricula. They complement faculty and staff for their commitment to helping them make the transition from the university to career fields or continuing their education.

Our students are in high demand by business and industry, academia and government. Many become successful entrepreneurs. I am pleased to report

our students are entering career fields well prepared to meet the demands of today's increasingly complex job market and changing societal needs. We have a stellar record placing CALS students into graduate and professional school. These are among the most meaningful measures of success for our programs.

The University of Florida will undergo Southern Association of Colleges and Schools accreditation in 2003. One of the major accrediting activities will center on student and faculty globalization. Jim Jones, distinguished professor of agricultural and biological engineering, is leading a task force to provide a roadmap to more fully involve our students and faculty in international activities that help us better understand reactions, consequences and impact locally and globally. Making globalization a focus of the accreditation process is a clear demonstration that it is a University priority. We are encouraging our undergraduates to participate in at least two activities that include study abroad, internships, research with faculty, volunteer service and leadership development. CALS is participating fully in this inclusive initiative.

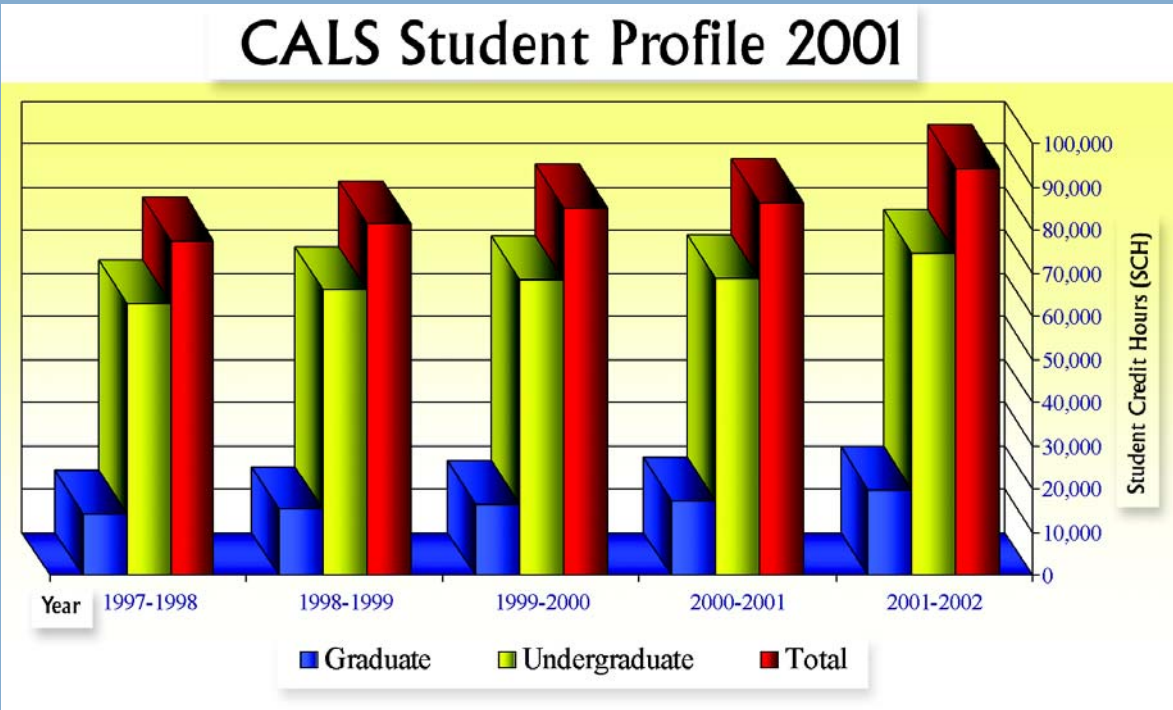
A presidential task force on the future of the university is currently studying ways to improve and restructure the University of Florida. We welcome this examination and believe we will emerge a stronger college and university. As these winds of change blow, CALS remains fully engaged and committed to vigorously pursuing our agenda of preparing society-ready graduates. The college is focused intently on further developing truly excellent educational programs and ever greater leadership and innovation in the field. I look forward to working with each of you to advance these objectives.

Jimmy G. Cheek

Enrollment Fall 2001

	Total	Men	Women
Undergraduate	2,914	1,135	1,779
Undergraduate Percent			
African Americans	222	7.62	
Hispanic Americans	272	9.33	
Native Americans	11	0.38	
Asian Americans	204	7.00	
Foreign Nationals	49	1.68	
Other	2,156	73.99	
Graduate			
	Total	Men	Women
	860	472	388
Graduate Percent			
African Americans	26	3.02	
Hispanic Americans	45	5.23	
Native Americans	9	1.05	
Asian Americans	20	2.33	
Foreign Nationals	237	27.56	
Other	523	60.81	

CALS Student Profile 2001



Degrees Granted in 2001

Undergraduate Degree				Graduate Degree			
	Total	Men	Women		Total	Men	Women
Bachelor's	720	278	442	Master's	152	85	67
				Doctoral	64	41	23
Bachelor's				Master's PhD			
African Americans	46			African Americans	7	0	
Hispanic Americans	65			Hispanic Americans	16	2	
Native Americans	2			Native Americans	0	0	
Asian Americans	50			Asian Americans	3	1	
Foreign Nationals	14			Foreign Nationals	23	35	
Other	543			Other	103	26	

CALS Facts:

CALS graduates accounted for more than 18 percent of the students enrolling in UF's veterinary medicine, medicine, dentistry and physician assistant programs in fall 2001.

Student Reporters Cover CALS News, Events

A new partnership between the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences and an agricultural communication course has provided students with real-world experience.

Many of the articles in this edition of CALS Connection were written by students in AEE 4036: Advanced Agricultural Communication Writing.

In the fall course, students wrote feature stories for the CALS newsletter and developed media kits, which included news releases, brochures, feature stories and news stories for nonprofit organizations and county fairs. The students, all agricultural communication majors,

also submitted long feature stories to major agricultural magazines for publication.

The partnership with the CALS newsletter was a natural. It provided students with another outlet for their writing, and it helped CALS cover events and feature individual students and alumni that CALS might not otherwise have been able to do.

Student contributors were Rebecca Ambrose, Kelli Dunn, Emily Eubanks, Steven Lands and Keyatta Shade. Ricky Telg, associate professor in the department of agricultural education and communication, teaches the course.

CALS Upper Division Honors Program Going Strong and Growing Daily

BY KATIE SIEVING

The College of Agricultural and Life Sciences realizes that the exceptional focus required to maintain academic excellence can often make it difficult to see the connection between a high G.P.A. and opportunity after graduation. Participation in the CALS upper division honors program during a student's last two to three years as an undergraduate provides students with important links to their future.

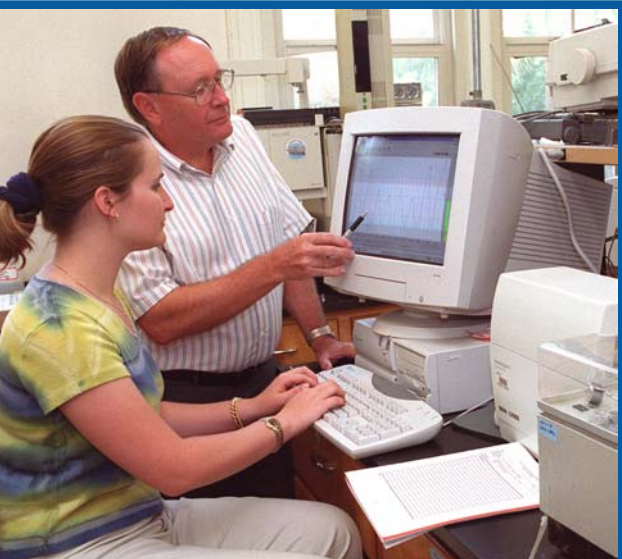
CALS honors requirements are flexible, accommodating students' demanding schedules while supporting their efforts to achieve. The nine credit hours of coursework for the program also fulfill requirements in a student's major. The requirements do not add more work; they enrich their undergraduate



Katie Sieving, associate professor of wildlife ecology and conservation, coordinates the CALS honors program.

experience in ways that help students discover strengths, intellectual passions and future goals, according to students.

CALS is the only college at UF with an organized upper division honors program. E. Jane Luzar, associate dean, notes that students who choose to join the CALS honors program are those who seek challenges. Those who are open to new ways of thinking, delving deeper into and beyond their



Don Graetz, professor of soil and water science, points out information for honors student Katherine Finn.

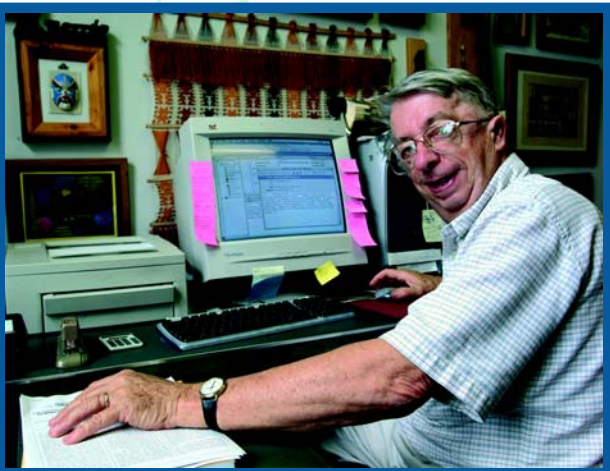
required coursework and asking questions about where they are headed in life.

Faculty who make the honors program function in this way are among the best from UF and beyond. These faculty members are productive, creative people with extraordinary talent for mentoring young people who will shape our future, Luzar said.

The core course that all CALS honors students take is ALS 4921 Honors Colloquium. This course emphasizes critical thinking in the context of a topic selected by the faculty member who teaches the course, usually a topic that is in the faculty member's area of expertise. That sparks the students' interest and generates impassioned learning, notes Luzar.

In addition to the colloquium, many students are entering into an 'honors contract' with instructors of their regular upper division courses. Don Graetz, professor of soil and water science; Bobbi Langkamp-Henken, associate professor of food science; Gail Kauwell, associate professor of food science; Maurice Marshall, professor of food science; Steve Talcott, assistant professor of food science; Millie Ferrer, associate professor of family, youth, and community sciences; John Reynolds, professor of food resource and economics; Lisa House, associate professor of food and resource economics; Rebecca Baldwin, entomology; and Brian McNab, zoology, each have from one to five CALS honors students doing contract work this semester. These experiences deepen the students' exposure to the course material.

Currently, 131 students with a GPA of 3.5 or higher are enrolled in the CALS upper division honors program; that's approximately one-third of all eligible students in CALS.



Bill Zettler, professor of plant pathology, has been the professor of record three times for ALS 4921 Honors Colloquium.

Get In Where You Fit In

BY STEVEN LANDS

"Get in where you fit in" could be the motto for the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences when it comes to student organizations. The college offers more than 30 organizations, the most offered by any college at the University of Florida. The organizations are the most offered by any college. Student organizations in the college are diverse, as well as numerous, including clubs in food and resource economics, equine sciences, agronomy and soils, and wildlife.

"CALS offers a club or organization for any aspect of agriculture, human resources, natural resources and the life sciences that students might be interested in," said Rick Rudd, faculty advisor for the Agricultural Education and Communication Society (AECS).

With all of the opportunities for education in the college, it is no surprise the faculty of the college are so involved with students at the University of Florida, said AECS Vice President Erin Emery. "We do all kinds of things for CALS," Emery said. "We do advertising for the college at the FFA conventions, and we do recruiting for the college." The organizations are student-run and organized by elected officers.

"Student-run organizations are an important part of undergraduate studies," Rudd said. "It gives them a chance to enhance professional skills and leadership development."

All student organizations are proactive and committed to the academic improvement of their members and betterment in community service. Working with 4-H chapters and volunteering at Shands Hospital and the vet school are some of the activities these clubs offer students.

The wide range of organizations provides students with the opportunity to find a club that suits their interest. All the organizations have websites that can be accessed through the CALS home

page, cals.ufl.edu. Each site offers a description of the club and gives information on how to join and whom to contact if interested. CALS student organizations travel to meetings and frequently host meetings. For example, the Gator



Jennifer Donze and Suzannah Laski arrange flowers for the Alpha Zeta Valentine's Day Flower Sale.



While attending the conclave at Texas A&M, the Forestry Club members visit a cabin in Whitehouse, Texas; back row from left: Dave Zabriski, Kevin MacEwan, Jason Hartley, Dan Schultz (staff/advisor), Michael Morris, John Shanks; middle row: Justina Jones, Michael Lehman, Seth Ward, Adria Deyarmond, Pat Deren; front row: Allison Mead, Liana Cintron, Wes Burns, Jenn Barnett.

Forestry Club attended the conclave at Texas A&M, and Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences (MANRRS) hosted a regional leadership workshop this spring at the University of Florida.



MANRRS regional workshop group photo with students from Clemson University, Florida A&M University, University of Georgia, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, and University of Florida.

Global Gators: CALS Goes International



Students Gain Knowledge, World View In Russia

BY KEYATTA SHADE

When most University of Florida students leave their dorm rooms during the spring semester, one challenge they hardly expect to face is trekking through snow to get to their classes. But for UF students Noah Handley and

Theresa Lynn Lagasse, snow was virtually an everyday occurrence as they took part in the Moscow State University Exchange Program in Moscow, Russia.

The program, connected with UF's College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, is in its second year and proving to be beneficial to students and the university. "I got a lot of cultural experiences that opened my mind to other things," Handley said, "not only in school, but in the business world as well."

Lagasse, an agricultural education and communication senior, said the trip, more than anything, gave her a chance to get to know a different culture. "It gave me the cultural experience of getting to know the Russian people," Lagasse said.

Both students dealt with a number of challenges when they first arrived. Neither spoke Russian, so a task as simple as navigating around town could be a chore in itself. "All the signs were, of course, not in English," said Handley, a senior in agricultural operations management. "You had to learn very basic words for things like entrances and exits, and at least be able to recognize street names."

Likewise, when the students went into the local community, it was difficult for them to converse in the marketplace. They had to have a Russian student with them to translate any interactions that took place in the market. "By the term's end, we could negotiate by ourselves, anywhere, with the little bit of Russian that we did have," Lagasse said. Despite this, Lagasse said this wasn't the most challenging part of the experience for her. "The most challenging part of this for me, personally, was being a 45-year-old student among 15 20 year olds," Lagasse said.

While in Russia, the students also took university courses that lasted a month at a time and were taught by U.S. professors, who also took the trip to Moscow.

"We spent as much as 12 hours a week in the classroom to cover a condensed course load in one month," Lagasse said. Some of the courses students took included Russian, agricultural structures, agricultural environmental effects and agricultural communications. "We also produced a web-based newsletter bi-weekly to keep our friends, family and associates back home in America informed of what we were doing," Lagasse said. She added that the students also took a seminar class, where they "went into the community investigating, studying and being guests of different agricultural enterprises in and around Moscow. We went to a tremendous greenhouse facility that covered about six square hectares of greenhouses."

One of Handley's fondest memories is of the time he spent on one of the local farms during a trip away from campus. "Land ownership is not a common right there," Handley said. "These farmers have to deal with greater challenges than we do in the States."

Penn State University, which runs the program, allows students from five universities to travel to Moscow and study agriculture.

Nick Place, assistant professor of agricultural education and communication and facilitator of the program, said the program benefits the university as well. "By having these types of programs, it really helps us to become more of a global university," Place said.

He said many employers are looking for students with international experiences. "These kinds of options and opportunities are helping us to meet that requirement," Place said. As far as the students are concerned, Place observed the program "stretches them personally and professionally. It helps to remove the blinders. It helps them to look at things much differently after they participate in international programs such as this." Students also have the opportunity of making lifelong contacts with students from the other four universities from the United States participating in the program. "Even more so, they make some really good friends and contacts with the students from Moscow State University," Place said.

Two more CALS students are participating in the spring 2003 program. One of those students, UF junior Josh Brown, said the opportunity to learn

about another culture fueled his reasons for going. "One thing I've learned in my intercultural communications class is how to create a better world view," Brown said. "Hopefully, by being put into a different kind of culture, it's going to give me a new light on how to view other cultures."

Outstanding International Student Awards



CALS students are recognized with UF Outstanding International Student Awards, April 25, 2002. From left to right: Waldir Fernandes, Ph.D. student, food and resource economics, Brazil; Marcela Machicote, Ph.D. student, wildlife ecology and conservation, Argentina; Cynthia Khoo, Ph.D. student, entomology and nematology, Philippines; Roger Darros-Barbosa, Ph.D. student, food science and human nutrition, Brazil; Elio Jovicich, Ph.D. student, horticultural science, Argentina.

Spring Break Study Group Tours Costa Rica

BY MICKIE SWISHER

Mickie Swisher, student globalization coordinator for the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences and 11 students participated in the college's 2002 spring break study tour in Costa Rica. This group examined approaches to development that have been successful in the host nation. Despite the obvious differences between Florida and Costa Rica, the state and small Central American nation have much in common. Tourism and agriculture are key economic activities for both. Like Florida, Costa Rica depends greatly on international migrant labor for agriculture. Both Florida and Costa Rica are destinations for many immigrants. The group wanted to learn about the problems that Costa Rica has faced and the lessons they have learned about how to achieve sustainable agricultural and tourism development.

The group visited several sites. At the La Selva Biological Research Station, owned and operated by the Organization for Tropical Studies, they learned that conservation has a long history in Costa Rica. The group visited a local Dole Corporation banana plantation and found that Dole is taking steps to enhance the sustainability and reduce the environmental impacts of producing bananas.

A visit to a local health facility showed the group the problems that occur when international laborers, generally of poorer health and lower educational status than Costa Ricans, become a large part of the population in an area.

The next site they visited, a small village called Zeta Trece, is a classic example of locally based ecotourism. Motivated by the failure of agriculture to provide adequate income, women in this town have started their own hotel, restaurant, and butterfly and medicinal herb farm. Tourism is a natural form to them since the beautiful and active Arenal Volcano is only a few kilometers away. The group visited Los Termales del Bosque, a private farm in the area that has combined ecotourism and cattle production. The group's "research" there included spending time in the hot springs fueled by the volcano, horseback riding and a canopy tour where most of them strapped themselves into a harness to swing through the top of the rain forest.

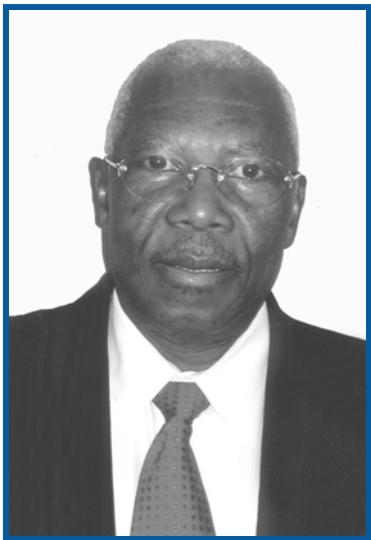
The group then returned to San Jose, Costa Rica's capital, and made additional day trips. They visited local vegetable and coffee farms in the highlands, took a day to go to the beach and spent the last day visiting Poas Volcano, another active volcano and Costa Rica's oldest and most visited national park.



The Costa Rica study tour group takes a break at the Dole banana plantation. Back row; Jose Manuel Mora (local faculty member), John Ricketts, Steven Hall, John Hooker, Brian Myers; Middle row, Cindy Malecki, Mickie Swisher, Megan McCracken, Francisco Umana (Dole Spokesman), Jason Steward; Front row, John Hall, Erin Eckhardt, Kris Grage, Mary Dyal.

Alumni Achieve Success

Mortimer H. Neufville



Mortimer H. Neufville, who received his bachelor’s degree from Tuskegee University and his master’s and doctoral degrees in animal sciences from the University of Florida, was honored December 15, 2001, with UF’s Distinguished Alumnus award for his many contributions to the agricultural sciences. Neufville has distinguished himself internationally and among his peers as a renowned scientist, outstanding educator and visionary leader.

Neufville currently serves as executive vice president of the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC). NASULGC, the nation’s oldest higher education association comprised of public universities, land-grant institutions and many of the nation’s public university systems, has been at the forefront of national education leadership for more than a century. As second-in-command at NASULGC, Neufville plays a prominent and effective role in articulating and coordinating the activities of land-grant and affiliate institutions in the areas of food, agriculture, natural resources, environmental affairs, human sciences, forestry and international affairs.

Throughout his career, Neufville has earned an international reputation for his dedication to quality education, research and service. Neufville has provided leadership for numerous initiatives to help institutions garner funding, respectability and recognition. As an international leader in animal science, Neufville has provided guidance and counsel to numerous prestigious organizations such as the American Association for the Advancement of Science and Education Council, the President’s Administrative Council and the National Higher Education Committee of the Joint Council of Food and Agriculture.

Betsy Gardner

BY STEVEN LANDS



A white picket fence, fountains and flowers in bloom, welcome people like the first day of spring.

The Plant Shoppe, a florist and garden center in Greenery Square, has everything imaginable for a garden. The shop has been in Gainesville for 17 years; however, in June 1999, a new and eager owner wanted to get her hands dirty. Betsy

Gardner, a native of Homestead, grew up in the horticulture industry learning from her parents. Although Betsy learned a tremendous amount about plants, she was not interested in growing them. “I always liked to help as a child,” Gardner said, “but it was the retail aspect that I was interested in.” A willingness to learn took her to the University of Florida to study environmental horticulture in the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences. In 1996, Betsy received her bachelor’s degree, and in 1999 she received her master’s degree while working for the shop she now owns.

Growing up around a nursery gave Gardner an edge in plant knowledge. That is why she spent most of her graduate study in the food and resource economics department taking marketing and business classes. “Flowers and plants are great,” she said with a smile, “but, I like counting the money.” Before Gardner bought the shop, she thought some hands-on training after her classes would be a good idea. So, she worked as an intern for garden centers at Epcot Center and in Minnesota and Texas. Following her work at UF, Gardner managed a garden center in Lowe’s for nine months prior to finding her dream shop. “I thought I wanted to get away and work for someone else for a while,” Gardner said. “After I worked for about nine months, I bought it.”

Gardner has started to fulfill a dream that began at the University of Florida in her junior year. She wants to eventually own a complex like Greenery Square and have everything for customers at one place. “I would like to deal with everything and anything in the gardening business,” she said. “I’ve planned, I’ve been prepared, and now I am on my way.”

Guillermo Palacios



Guillermo Palacios is a man with a vision and a mission in the Talanga Valley of Honduras, where he directs the Agricultural School of El Hogar.

The 1983 University of Florida College of Agricultural and Life Sciences graduate leads a faculty that teaches modern agricultural techniques to 40 of the poorest elementary and middle school age boys in a desperately poor Central American nation.

A program of the Episcopal Diocese of Honduras, the school is one of three educational institutions that form Proyectos El Hogar (El Hogar Projects), headquartered in the Honduran capital of Tegucigalpa.

The institution Palacios directs is located on a 270-acre farm where boys learn up-to-date farming methods that are appropriate for the Honduran economy and environment. The boys also complete what would be the freshman year in high school in America.

Reflecting the economic conditions of Honduras, farms are much smaller than in North America. Plots of four and five acres are seen as prosperous. Therefore, it’s crucial to teach young boys how to make the most of small parcels of land.

Palacios’ school got its start in 1991 when 15 boys and three staff members moved to Talanga with their cows, pigs and goats. They lived in rented quarters as they built their school from scratch. The Reverend Leo Frade, then bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Honduras, dedicated the facility in 1993.

Palacios was there from the start, having joined the El Hogar staff in 1989 as a teacher at an agricultural school jointly run with the Roman Catholic church. However, that school was located on very poor, dry land nearly 100 miles from El Hogar’s headquarters.

“The move to Talanga, was very welcome, all of our buildings were constructed without destroying a single tree, and we try our best to share that environmental commitment with students” Palacios said.

At both the agricultural school and the technical institute, academic studies continue alongside vocational education. The academic side of things must never be lost, according to Lazaro Ramon Juarez, who heads the staff of El Hogar Projects.

While El Hogar began in 1979 as a school for “street boys,” the staff now tries to get to the country’s poorest children before they are abandoned. Parents who have absolutely nothing to offer their children at home see El Hogar as the only chance their sons will have to achieve success.



Young students learn agricultural techniques in Honduras.

What’s New In Your Life?

Tell us what is happening! Stay connected to CALS

Through the *CALS Connection*, we are reaching out to keep you informed about CALS news and activities. Now it’s your turn. We’d like to include current information about you in an upcoming issue of *CALS Connection*.

We are interested in awards, jobs, moves and family information. Please note changes in your address, employment or professional activities that you want to share with your classmates and colleagues.

Mail your information to: *CALS Connection*
College of Agricultural and Life Sciences
P.O. Box 110270
Gainesville, FL 32611-0270
Email: tnpemble@mail.ifas.ufl.edu

Name: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: _____

Work Phone: _____ Email: _____

Is any of the above information new? _____

Information: _____

Please let us know if you have any questions or if we may be of help. We welcome your calls and visits to McCarty Hall.

Mission

To provide a high-quality education to students statewide resulting in society-ready graduates in the areas of food, agriculture, natural resources, human and life sciences.

Core Values

To meet its requirements to the people of Florida and to serve its mission, CALS advances its core values:

Excellence is the standard for all CALS academic programs.

Through *diversity*, CALS can ensure gender, racial and social balance.

As part of a land grant university, CALS is *responsive* and *accountable* to Florida’s citizens.

CALS is *global* in its perspective and develops world-class programs on behalf of all its students.

CALS accepts responsibility to expand the *public’s awareness* of its programs and benefits.

Students, Faculty and Staff Recruit for the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences

BY KELLI DUNN

Recruitment is one key to high enrollment for a college, and no one knows that better than Emily Sperling.

Sperling is the director of student recruitment and retention for the University of Florida’s College of Agricultural and Life Sciences. As director, she recruits mainly undergraduate students from community colleges and high schools around Florida and maintains relationships with community college and high school advisors, faculty and students.

To build these relationships, Sperling attends different events around the state, including college and career fairs at schools, on-campus fairs, various minority workshops and regional events such as the Sunbelt Agricultural Exposition in Moultrie, Ga.

Attending these events and meeting people are Sperling’s favorite parts of her job, she said. “Maintaining relationships with the people involved, the schools’ advisors, faculty and the students themselves is what makes my job worthwhile,” Sperling said. “I also enjoy working with the departments here in our college and the organizations on campus.”



Emily Sperling (right) advises Kristina Garner and Bridget Moroney.

Sperling does not work alone to recruit, however. She has plenty of help and relies on partnering with the undergraduate and student service coordinators of each department to develop recruitment plans specific to the department’s needs.

The CALS Ambassadors are another integral part of the recruitment efforts, she said. As students, the ambassadors provide a certain insight other students may be interested in. They can give a “real deal” outlook on being a UF student, Sperling said.

CALS Ambassador Elizabeth Serca agrees with Sperling about the success the ambassadors have in recruiting prospective students. Current students talking to prospective students about the college can create a bond that a professor or advisor may not automatically build, she said. “A lot of times, a faculty member can’t answer a question a student may want to ask,” Serca said.

While Sperling focuses more on community college recruitment, the ambassadors attend a majority of the high school college fairs and work the college-sponsored events such as TailGator and Gator Encounter.

With more than 30 events a year to attend, Sperling is often out of the office. An average day may take her to any of Florida’s 28 community colleges, where she holds information sessions, meets students and shares information with advisors and faculty.

At these events, Sperling uses several informational brochures to teach students about the university and, more specifically, the college. Interested students also fill out information cards.

A typical office day for Sperling is just as busy. While in the office, she responds to student inquiries over the phone or via e-mail. Each of the students who fill out an information card receives a personal letter from Sperling, thanking them for their interest in the college. She also highlights the college and department students marked by sending them departmental brochures. These students are then added to her mailing list to be updated on scholarship and event information and for tracking purposes.

Sperling keeps track of the students, to determine if the recruiting is working. She is beginning to see the results of her efforts as her first recruits are enrolling.

Food science and human nutrition major Joy Felton is one of Sperling’s recruits. Felton enrolled at UF as a junior in the college after talking to Sperling. She says Sperling’s enthusiasm and attention to detail about Felton’s intended major and future career made her sure UF was the place for her.

“She gave a lot of detail about the college and the department,” Felton said. “She also gave me details about career opportunities after graduation. That, along with her enthusiastic portrayal of the college, convinced me.”

Sperling said she is enthusiastic about the programs because she believes in them. A UF food and resource economics graduate herself, Sperling said she is happy to bring students to the college. “I am very comfortable recruiting students into a degree program I graduated from,” she said. “It is evident to the students that I’m not just a traveling salesperson, that I have a stake in it, too.”



CALS .ufl.edu

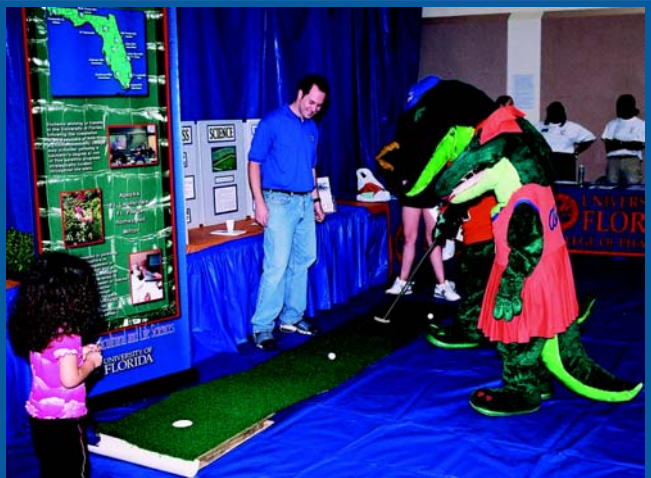
Recruiting Makes Strides With Gator Encounter

What do a medical doctor, golf course superintendent, forester, social worker and business analyst have in common? Prospective students and their families, teachers and advisors ascended on the Florida Gymnasium April 6 to learn the answer to that question at Gator Encounter 2002. More than 400 participants learned that professionals of all types found their paths to success through the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences.

Gator Encounter, the college’s annual open house, allowed participants to explore programs offered by CALS through 40 interactive displays and conversations with faculty, staff and students from departments and student organizations.

Students like Crystal Wilkerson, a high school student from Orange Park, enjoyed the opportunity to learn about CALS’ top-notch programs. “I finally have some direction and college isn’t something I am dreading anymore,” Wilkerson said. Like Wilkerson, many participants enjoyed learning about CALS through the interactive displays that included hands-on activities involving braiding heather plants, taking quizzes about the environment, learning about sturgeon and handling alligators.

Emily Sperling, CALS director of student recruitment and retention, felt the event was a great success because of the efforts of the departments and the quality of their activities. “Participants came to the event with their curiosity in tow,” she said. “Our departments did a fantastic job of satisfying their curiosity and educating them about exciting academic and career opportunities in agriculture and natural resources.”



Matt Brecht assists Albert and Alberta with their putting.

CALS Ambassadors Build Leadership Skills, Host Events

BY REBECCA AMBROSE

You may have seen them around campus and at special events at the University of Florida. They sport navy blazers and khaki pants. They will gladly strike up a conversation about the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences with anyone willing to listen. They are the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences Ambassadors.

The CALS Ambassadors' objective is to create interest in and comprehension of the diverse programs, majors and opportunities in the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences. Recruitment, alumni relations, special events and leadership development are ways that the ambassadors work toward this objective, according to CALS Ambassador program coordinator Paul Willis.

In 1989 a small group of students in CALS were brought together to form the first ambassador team, called the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Ambassadors. Presently the team has 33 members who were chosen through a rigorous application and interview process. The process, which consists of an application and then later, a two-part interview if the applicant is chosen, determines how well the student can represent the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences.

A student desiring to be an ambassador must meet the minimum academic standards and be willing to fulfill the responsibilities of the time commitment to the program, Willis said. "Last year we had roughly 50 applicants," Willis said. "About 20 of them were selected to be a part of this year's team."

Sarah Joe Cannon was one of the ambassadors chosen. A junior majoring in agricultural communication, Cannon first wanted to become an ambassador when she heard about their excellent reputation around campus. "The CALS Ambassadors are a group that I am proud to be a part of," Cannon said. "We develop camaraderie within the group and focus on developing our leadership skills."

The ambassadors commit to a one-hour weekly meeting and participation in an average of four to six hours a month for events," Willis said.

The CALS Ambassadors host alumni events such as TailGator, recruiting programs like Gator Encounter, and leadership development conferences such as the Southern Regional Ambassador Conference, which was organized entirely by the UF CALS Ambassador team in April. Cannon participates in an average of six events per semester with the ambassadors. "What you get out of being an ambassador depends entirely on what you put into it," Cannon said.

"In addition to hosting most CALS events, the ambassadors speak to many groups, including students at high schools or community colleges to let them know how much CALS has to offer," Willis said. The ambassadors will be a part of two new aspects: fundraising for the college and working on a public relations campaign, Food for Thought.

"The ambassadors will speak to civic organizations throughout the state about food and natural resources and how IFAS and the college support that," Willis said. The ambassadors have also spent time working with lobbyists in the state legislature and writing postcards to prospective students.

cals.ufl.edu/Ambassadors



LEAD 2002

BY AIMEE HUSKEY

The University of Florida College of Agricultural and Life Sciences Ambassadors hosted the first Southern Regional Ambassador Conference April 12 - 13 in Gainesville.

"We were excited to host it, set the standard for future conferences and give our students the opportunity to plan, coordinate and implement a conference," Director Paul Willis said. He said the conference has been talked about for several years, and UF finally took the initiative and planned it. Leading to Enhance Ambassador Development, or LEAD, as the conference has been named, was planned and carried out by the UF CALS Ambassadors.

"The conference was to offer an opportunity to ambassadors in colleges of agriculture and life sciences to come together, share ideas and engage in leadership development activities," he said.

CALS Ambassadors Chris Vitelli and Natalie Lamneck served as co-chairs of the conference, and they developed committees to oversee all the major projects of the event. "The conference provided the fundamental tools for ambassador teams to excel in the areas of recruitment, team leadership, delegation and personal accountability," Vitelli said.

Vitelli said he hopes that every ambassador team found an area that best met their needs to enhance their mission. "I hope that all the ambassadors in attendance gained a great appreciation for the opportunity they have to make an impact at their college by fulfilling the duties they have as an ambassador," he said.

Eighty-five ambassadors from nine schools attended the conference held in the Touchdown Terrace and at the Holiday Inn.

Some highlights of the conference were a speech by John Lombardi at the closing banquet and a leadership development session led by Melissa Lester, Willis said.

Ambassadors from the University of Arkansas, University of Georgia, North Carolina State University, Clemson University, Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College, Auburn University and University of Florida participated in personal development, team leadership, consensus building and delegation activities so they could become stronger ambassadors, he said. This conference provided ambassadors the opportunity to identify their responsibilities to fulfill their duties to their respective colleges.



David Yoder, along with other UF CALS Ambassadors representing each participating school, welcome Ambassadors from the southern region to LEAD 2002.

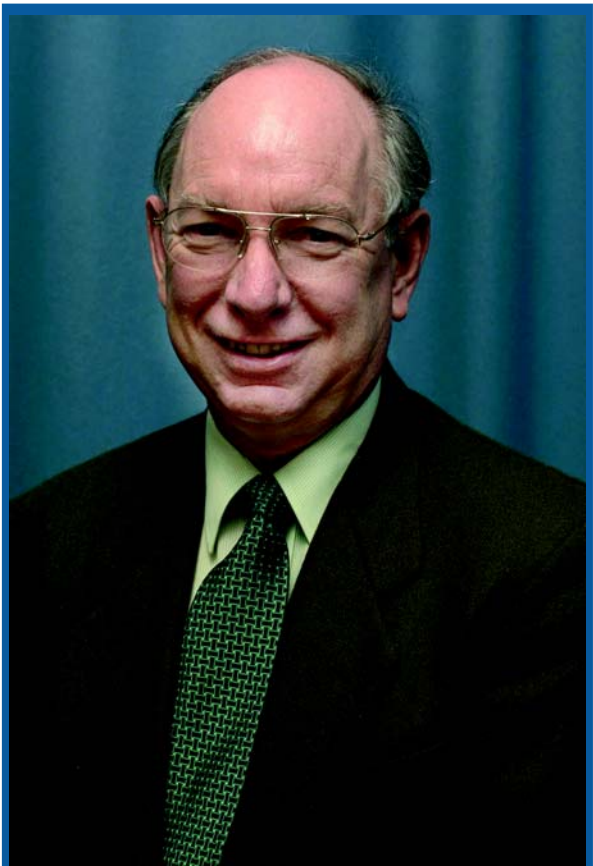
"We hope to have more schools next year, and we want to grow to about 125 participants," Willis said.

The 2003 LEAD conference is set for March at North Carolina State University.



2001-2002 CALS Ambassadors

Faculty Members Earn Awards, Honors



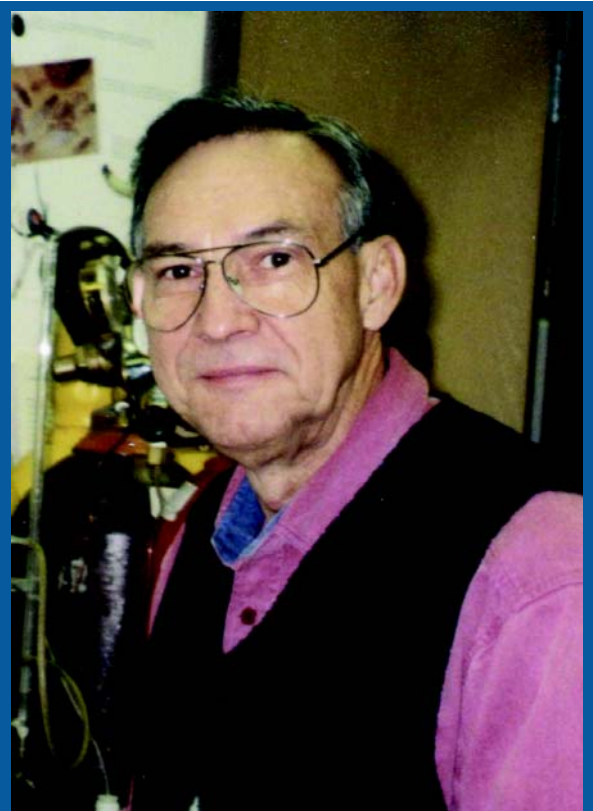
William W. Thatcher, professor of animal sciences

William W. Thatcher, professor of animal sciences, IFAS, is one of five University of Florida recipients of a “2002 Doctoral Dissertation Advisor Mentoring Award” presented by the University of Florida’s Graduate School. Thatcher is recognized for his outstanding contributions as a doctoral dissertation advisor and mentor. He currently mentors four doctoral students and one master’s student. To date, he has trained 16 master students, 23 doctoral students and eight post-doctorate associates. Many of his students have received national professional society awards, as well as outstanding thesis awards at the University of Florida. Previously, Thatcher was the recipient of the L.E. Casida Awards for Excellence in Graduate Training from the American Society of Animal Science.

Mike Olexa, professor of food and resource economics, received the Food and Agriculture Sciences Excellence in College and University Teaching Award in Washington, D.C. November 11, 2001. The award, sponsored by the USDA and the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC), is one of two honors given each year at the annual meeting of NASULGC. It includes a \$5,000 stipend to be used by the recipient for improving teaching at his or her university.



Mike Olexa, professor of food and resource economics



Jim Nation, professor of entomology and nematology

Florida Blue Key Leadership Honorary seeks to recognize individuals who have demonstrated outstanding service and dedication to the university. **Jim Nation** and **Mike Olexa**, CALS faculty members, were recognized by Blue Key as distinguished faculty in 2001. They were selected for their distinguished records of excellent teaching and commitment to students; the recognition of their abilities, talents and skills by their peers; records of scholarly achievement through publication; a sensitivity to and concern for the development of students; and an overall commitment to UF.

Faculty Honored at the 2001 Convocation with Faculty Teaching and Advising Awards

Four CALS faculty members were recognized for excellence in teaching and advising at the 2001 Annual CALS Scholarship and Leadership Convocation. **Jim Kimbrough**, professor of plant pathology, and **Al Wysocki**, assistant professor of food and resource economics, were recognized for their contributions to undergraduate education in CALS. **George Fitzpatrick**, professor of environmental horticulture, was selected as Undergraduate Advisor of the Year for his contributions to advising at the CALS off-campus programs at Homestead and Ft. Lauderdale. The award for Graduate Teacher/Advisor of the year in CALS was awarded to **William Thatcher**, professor of animal sciences.



James Kimbrough professor of plant pathology Undergraduate Teacher of the Year	George Fitzpatrick professor of environmental horticulture Undergraduate Advisor of the Year	Al Wysocki assistant professor of food and resource economics Undergraduate Teacher of the Year	William W. Thatcher professor of animal sciences Graduate Teacher/Advisor of the Year
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Welcome to the Celebration - 2003 marks the University of Florida’s sesquicentennial anniversary. The University of Florida traces its roots to 1853, the year that public funding was approved to support higher education in Florida. For 150 years that deep commitment to higher education has been at the heart of the University of Florida. In the spirit of our sesquicentennial celebration we will reflect on the university’s past, respect its present and look into its future through a yearlong series of academic programs, special events, exhibits and commemorative festivities. You are invited to join in the year’s activities honoring the past and shaping the future.

Students Recognized for Outstanding Achievement

Jack L. Fry Graduate Teaching Award



Susan Moyers has been a teaching assistant for HUN 5246 (Current Issues in Dietary Supplements) and HUN 2201 (Fundamentals of Nutrition). In addition to being a teaching assistant, she has managed to maintain a 4.0 GPA in her graduate studies.

Moyer’s teaching responsibilities have included graduate and undergraduate courses, as well as the design and development of a course in nutrition for the College of Dentistry, design of PowerPoint presentations and Internet-based learning material.

She pursued an opportunity for additional teaching experience at the UF College of Dentistry and designed and taught a new graduate level course DEN 5230, Nutrition and Oral Health.

Dean’s Leadership Award



Natalie Lamneck is majoring in animal science with a specialization in poultry science in the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences. She will be attending vet school in the fall. Lamneck has been a CALS Ambassador since fall 1999.

Lamneck is past president of the Block and Bridle Club and also is involved in the Poultry Science Club, Alpha Zeta, Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and Golden Key Honor Society. She is a former member of 4-H and a recipient of the American FFA Degree. Lamneck has been the recipient of several scholastic awards including the

Doyle Conner Scholarship and the University of Florida Presidential Recognition Award.

E.T. York, Jr Award of Merit



Erin Eckhardt is majoring in environmental horticulture with minors in agricultural communication and anthropology. Eckhardt is a sister of Sigma Phi Alpha, a member of the Golden Key National Honor Society, the Agricultural Education and Communication Society and the Environmental Horticulture Club. After graduation, she plans to pursue a career in agriculture focusing on horticultural sciences.

Eckhardt is also a CALS Ambassador and would like to educate individuals about the agriculture industry and promote the opportunities of higher education. She developed and coordinated a leadership seminar for the State FFA Conference in 2001, which will now be part of the annual State FFA meeting. Testament to her academic abilities is the number of scholarships that Erin has received.

J. Wayne Reitz Medal of Excellence



Kelly Marie Clayton is majoring in food science and human nutrition with a specialization in dietetics. She is a member of Alpha Zeta, Golden Key Honor Society and the National Honor Society of Collegiate Scholars. After graduation, she plans to pursue a career in medicine. With that goal in mind, she has done volunteer work in several medical facilities, including the Diabetes Clinic, the Pediatric

Endocrine Clinics, the Emergency Room and the Operating Room at Shands Hospital in Gainesville.

Clayton has been on the CALS Dean's List and the President's Honor Roll and has received the Anderson Scholar Certificate of Highest Distinction. She also participates in the CALS upper division honors program.

Larry J. Connor Medal of Excellence



Aisha Cuadras is majoring in food science and human nutrition with a specialty in dietetics. She is a member of the honors program in the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, as well as Golden Key National Honor Society.

As a University Scholar, Cuadras is conducting a laboratory research study in which she is responsible for analyzing blood samples to quantitate folate concentrations. Her work, usually carried out by graduate students, illustrates her ability to excel in a research environment. Her research findings will be published as a journal article.

FFA Southern Region Vice President



Barrett Keene is majoring in agricultural education with minors in agricultural communications and agricultural law. Keene served as the 1999-2000 State FFA President. His involvement on campus has included Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity, the Agricultural Education and Communication Society, and Student Senate. Keene plans to pursue a career in agriculture education.

He also serves as the FFA southern region vice president.

Miss University of Florida



In addition to being named Miss University of Florida, **Tiffany LaCross** is a pre-med senior majoring in food science and human nutrition (FSHN). This summer, LaCross completed an internship with the FSHN department researching the effects of a particular genetic mutation on folic acid metabolism in young women.

She is currently the new member coordinator for Alpha Delta Pi sorority, associate coordinator of divisions for Florida Blue Key, associate coordinator of the Emerging Conference and the homecoming historian. She is a member of Florida Blue Key, Savant UF and the National Society of Collegiate Scholars.

Since coming to UF, LaCross has served as the director of the Miss University of Florida and Miss Florida Gator Scholarship Pageant, the Homecoming 2000 Administrative Assistant, service assistant director and Rho Chi for the Panhellenic Council, member of the university curriculum committee, a director for the Emerging Leaders Conference, 150th anniversary chairman for Alpha Delta Pi and a student senator.

LaCross enjoys volunteering with the Ronald McDonald House, Girl’s Club, March of Dimes and in various departments of Shands Hospital. She is a Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholar and a Kiwanis Scholar, and was recently named to Who’s Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges. Next year LaCross hopes to attend medical school.



Outstanding Female Leader



Jenny Lee Hayes is majoring in environmental horticulture, and is recognized for her tireless commitment to improving the quality and safety of her collegiate community.

Upon graduation Hayes will be recognized by the university as one of the seven Outstanding Leadership Award recipients.

Hayes’ vision and determination ensured her success in several campus organizations. In Student Government she served as senator, director of the Health Cabinet, and later as chief of staff. She was appointed the Panhellenic Council’s Alcohol

Education assistant director, helped create Homecoming’s Soulfest and served in several leadership positions in her sorority, Alpha Delta Pi. She was appointed to the Campus HIV Education and Policy Committee, Student Health Advisory Board, and served as chair of the Health Service Fee Committee. Through service to these committees, Hayes helped design the “Sloppy Gator” anti-drinking campaign and “Necessities for Living,” a campaign to educate the Gainesville community about the HIV virus.

She has professional experience with IFAS’ Governmental Affairs Office and the U.S. House of Representatives, where she concentrated on agricultural legislation. She has volunteered for the Students with Disabilities Office, Mentor/Mentee Program, Ronald McDonald House, the Gainesville City Tree Pruning project, and participated in Dance Marathon.

Hayes was also runner-up for Miss University of Florida for 2001.

CALS Yearly Events

Tailgator Changes for the New Century

By EMILY EUBANKS

TailGator sported a new look and location for 2001. To keep up with the times, the fifth annual College of Agricultural and Life Sciences TailGator had a few changes. On Saturday, September 29, 2001 more than 1,200 alumni, faculty and students attended TailGator before the University of Florida-Mississippi State football game. "TailGator provides an opportunity for alumni and friends to return to campus for a great time of fun and fellowship while being able to visit departmental displays and visit with current faculty, staff and students" said CALS Alumni and Friends Director Paul Willis.

TailGator moved to the Stephen C. O'Connell Center from the J. Wayne Reitz Union lawn this year. CALS Associate Dean E. Jane Luzar said TailGator participants liked the move since it was so much cooler indoors. Luzar also said alumni thought the displays were easier to see this year than in the past. "The use of a new facility shows the evolution of TailGator over the past several years," Luzar said. CALS Alumni and Friends President Kevin Huesman also thought the O'Connell Center was the best place to have TailGator.

In the past, TailGator has been exclusively for CALS alumni. Students have had a separate barbecue. This year, the two events were combined to provide more interaction among students, faculty and alumni. "We thought having the students networking with the alumni and friends would be fun for the alumni and may open new doors for the students," Willis said.

Luzar said TailGator provided alumni with exposure to new majors and clubs. It also linked the generations between alumni and students. "Having the chance to interact and network with alumni was a great opportunity for me," said CALS ambassador Marshall Baker. "With this being my first TailGator, I was surprised to see how many people attended and how the alumni were really interested in me."

CALS Dean Jimmy Cheek was impressed with how many people attended this year. When TailGator began five years ago, it was held behind McCarty Hall, with only about 600 people attending, he said. "TailGator was a tremendous success and being able to fill the O'Connell Center went far above our expectations," Cheek said. "Expanding the event from 600 people to 1,200 people is phenomenal."



Natalie Lamneck showcases autographed basketball for the auction.

two tickets to the Florida-Florida State football game. The auction brought in \$1,400 and proceeds from the auction benefited scholarships for CALS students. "For our first attempt, we were pleased with the auction," Willis said.

Willis said the O'Connell Center will be the venue for TailGator for the immediate future. "Tentative plans for next year are already being made and are exciting," Willis said. "While we aren't prepared to disclose details, these plans call for some changes that should enhance TailGator and get even more people involved."



Reggie Brown and Sydney Marshall accept their Awards of Distinction.

CALS Holds Teaching Enhancement Symposium



Mike Kane, professor of environmental horticulture, presents Putting It All Together: Documenting Good Teaching.

The second annual Teaching Enhancement Symposium was held August 16, 2001 at the UF Hotel and Conference Center in Gainesville. The College of Agricultural and Life Sciences continued its commitment to teaching excellence and improvement by offering sessions on many areas of interest to CALS faculty.

Sessions included topics such as "Teaching Students to Reason: Critical Thinking Within the Discipline" and "Education in a Multi-cultural Environment." All who attended appreciated the variety and depth of the sessions as they discovered new tools and ideas to enhance their teaching and student relations.

This annual event helps CALS to continue to realize its goals and commitment to excellence in teaching.



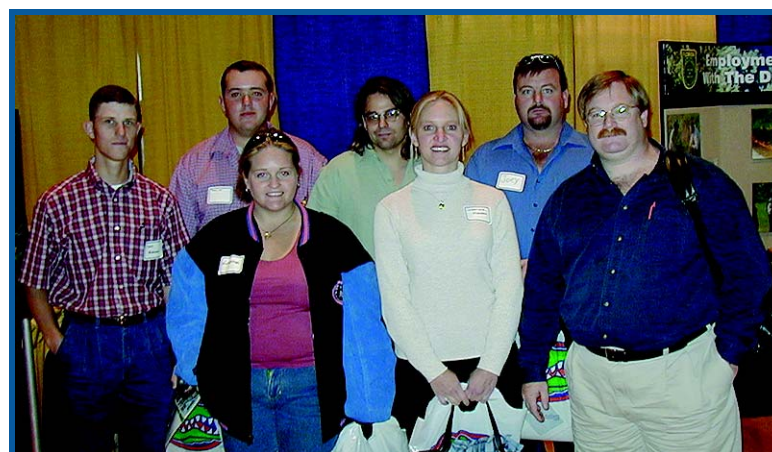
John Ricketts presents TA Success Stories: A Student's Perspective.

CALS Career Day is a Success

The College of Agricultural and Life Sciences held its annual Agriculture and Natural Resources Career Day February 13, 2002. The career fair gives employers the opportunity to showcase their products and services. Employers personally met with approximately 500 students in several fields including the sciences, economics, education, business, engineering, communication, natural resources and production.

Gabriele Klausen, president of the Indian River Agriculture Club, said "CALS Career Day provided me with an excellent opportunity to interact with industry representatives and initiate my job search. Whether you are planning to graduate in the near future or just get some ideas about future prospects, Career Day is a great investment."

JobHog.net was a special sponsor for the 2002 CALS Career Day. Jobhog.net posts jobs for a variety of companies with the agriculture and natural science industries.



Indian River Agriculture Club attends the CALS Career Day in February. From left, front row: Kristina Jewett, Gabriele Klausen, Mark Wade, assistant professor of food and resource economics. Back row: Chad McWaters, Darren Cole, Dana Moller, Joey Westberry.

Research Symposium Highlights Graduate Student Research

BY AIMEE HUSKEY

The second annual IFAS graduate research symposium was a great way to highlight research, according to the CALS Associate Dean E. Jane Luzar. “The symposium allows two students from each department to present their research to students and professors from other departments, while other students create posters detailing their research,” Luzar said. “Next year we would like to expand the poster section and have more students involved.”

Paul Willis, student and alumni services director, said the symposium enables graduate students to learn how to present their research to other people. “The symposium allows us to showcase graduate students’ research to faculty and other students, and give graduate students an opportunity to learn what peers are doing,” he said.

Observing other students’ presentations exposes graduate students to some of the skills needed to present their research outside of their discipline, said Jim Dyer agricultural education and communications assistant professor. “I definitely would want my students to present because it’s a forum for their research.”

Graduate students are able to see how others present and communicate to the public and these skills are important for future presentations, said food science and human nutrition doctoral student Amy Mackey. “The symposium is a great way to prepare yourself for national meetings outside of the university,” she said. Mackey presented work from her doctoral project and said the symposium offers exposure to let everyone see what

her department is doing. “We saw today that a lot of technology is cross-disciplinary,” Mackey said. The symposium also creates new ideas and prospects for joint research projects, said doctoral student Waldir Fernandes. He attended Aaron Hert’s presentation about a bacterium that adversely affects tomato plants and is related to bacterium that causes citrus canker. Fernandes said he wondered if joint research had been done. “Citrus

canker is a disease of high impact in both Florida and Sao Paulo, Brazil, the two major citrus producing regions of the world,” he said. Fernandes is a citizen of Brazil and has been working with citrus since 1987. Hert and Fernandes exchanged e-mail addresses so Hert could get in touch with Brazilian researchers for prospective joint projects in their research area.

Luzar said she would like to expand professional development for graduate students in future symposiums and is looking for suggestions on the symposium evaluations. Luzar and Willis agree there will be more time for students to explain their posters at the next symposium.

IFAS outstanding thesis and dissertation awards were also presented at the symposium. The Outstanding Thesis Award entitled “Canine Termite Detection” was presented to Shawn Brooks and the Outstanding Dissertation entitled “ADP-Glucose Pyrophosphorylase Activity From Maize-Potato Mosaics” was awarded to Joanna Cross. Phil Koehler, professor of entomology and nematology, advised Brooks; Curt Hannah, professor of horticultural sciences, advised Cross.



Carlos D. Messina, agricultural and biological engineering, explains his poster covering the Potential Use of Climate Forecasts in Managing Tomato Production in Florida and Puerto Rico.



J. Bernadette Moore, food science and human nutrition, explains her program “cDNA Array Analysis Identifies Thymic LCK as Upregulated in Moderate Murine Zinc Deficiency Prior to T-Lymphocyte Population Changes.”



Joanna Cross receives the IFAS Outstanding Dissertation Award and is joined by her advisor, Curt Hannah (left), professor of horticultural sciences. Shawn Brooks receives the IFAS Outstanding Master’s Thesis Award and is joined by his advisor, Phil Koehler (right), professor of entomology and nematology.

More Than 400 Attend CALS Student Barbecue

The annual CALS Student barbecue shows appreciation to all College of Agricultural and Life Sciences students and recognizes graduating seniors. This year’s barbecue was a tremendous success with more than 400 students and faculty attending.

Departments and student organizations within the college put up displays and booths which allow students convenient access to departments and information about changing their major, adding a minor or joining a student organization.

Albert and Alberta made an appearance. Each graduating senior received a small gift.

The evening’s program included “Pie the Professor” sponsored by Alpha Zeta and a karaoke contest. The winners of the karaoke contest were members of the the CALS Ambassadors. The scoring was very close between all the clubs who participated. The student barbecue also provides a great opportunity for students to meet other students and faculty.



Mike Fields, professor of animal sciences, is the “winner” of the Alpha Zeta “pie the professor” fund-raising contest. Pieing was done by Rowena Gilds, animal sciences department.



Albert and Alberta give each other a big hug!



Jimmy G. Cheek, dean for the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, recognizes graduating seniors at the barbecue.



Members of the pre-vet club and companion pet, Nutmeg, compete in the Karaoke competition.

CALS Provides Undergraduate Research Experience

BY KEYATTA SHADE

Selected undergraduate students in the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences are getting a head start conducting research in the University Scholars Program. Research is normally associated with graduate programs. Aisha Cuadras, a senior in the department of food science and human nutrition, is one of the students getting early research experience. “It’s a wonderful way to do undergraduate research,” Cuadras said. “It’s something that helps anybody, regardless of career goals.”

The program allows students to work one on one with UF faculty on selected research projects. The college is one of 15 that make up the program. Currently, CALS has 19 university scholars and academic mentors participating in research projects during the 2001-2002 academic year. Josiah Raymer, a senior in the environmental horticulture department, said the program has given him the opportunity to get hands-on experience while working in a lab. “It’s also given me the opportunity to work closely with professors,” Raymer said, “so it’s been really educational.”

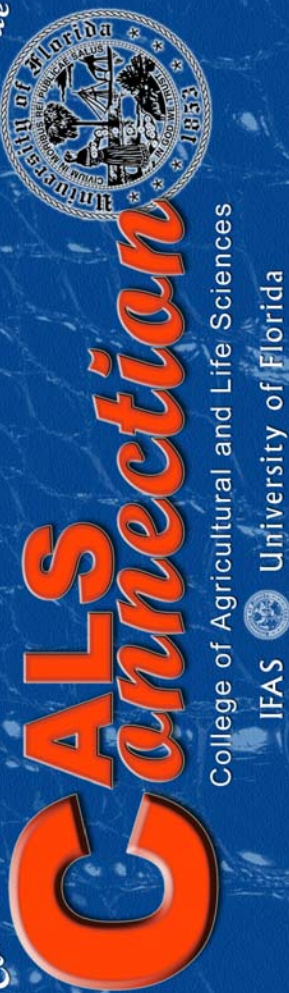
Before students can begin the program, they work with a faculty mentor to write a proposal explaining the objectives for their research project. After submitting the proposal, students are selected for the program through a competitive

process. E. Jane Luzar, CALS associate dean, said the program is important because many undergraduates do not get the opportunity to do lab work until they are in graduate school. “It’s the hallmark of an outstanding university to say that our undergraduates, not only our graduate students, have had an opportunity to experience a research endeavor,” Luzar said.

Upon completion of the research, students are expected to publish a 2,000-word paper in the Journal of Undergraduate Research. Students then must present their results at the University Scholars Symposium. Students interested in applying for the program should contact the dean’s office in the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences.

IFAS Promotes Student Research and Extension Opportunities

For the third summer, CALS students have an opportunity to conduct research or participate in an extension program with IFAS faculty. The Experiment Station (the research program of IFAS) and the Cooperative Extension Service (the outreach component of IFAS) have teamed up to provide more than 40 paid summer internships for CALS students. Students are matched with IFAS faculty mentors according to mutual research or extension interests and location. Once matched with faculty mentors, this unique program offers CALS students statewide opportunities to step beyond the classroom and gain hands-on experience. CALS students take advantage of the state-wide IFAS system of Research and Education Centers and 67 county extension offices, often allowing students to live at home during the internship experience.



New Academic Opportunities Offered

CALS continues to offer students new academic opportunities on and off-campus. CALS opened a new off-campus academic program in 2001 in partnership with Hillborough Community College at its Plant City campus. This new program offers students with an associate of arts degree the opportunity to pursue selected UF degree specializations and minors through CALS, including the new interdisciplinary studies major landscape and nursery management. Students at Plant City can also pursue a minor in management and sales through the food and resource economics department.

In April 2002, CALS also opened the long-awaited teaching wing for the off-campus program at the Indian River Research and Education Center at Ft. Pierce. The 20,000-square-foot teaching facility addition complements the existing O.C. Minton Hall, citrus research groves, vegetable research fields and other support facilities. The addition, which includes an adjacent two-acre teaching garden, features state-of-the-art distance education facilities, lecture rooms and auditorium for courses, seminars and meetings. The addition has five classrooms, two laboratories, a computer laboratory, a library, greenhouses and office space for faculty and staff.

On-campus students can expand their academic horizons by participating in one of the three new minors developed by CALS this year. The minor in precision agriculture, offered through the department of agricultural and biological engineering, exposes students to the principles and application of technologies used in modern precision farming. Classes in geospatial technologies,

precision agriculture, geographic information systems and crop management are included in the minor.

The new minor in environmental horticulture includes courses on plant identification, propagation and management. Flexibility in the choice of electives allows students to sample courses from all areas of environmental horticulture or focus on an environmental horticulture specialization.

Turfgrass science, the third new minor in CALS, is designed to provide students with a basic understanding of turfgrass culture as well as a knowledge of the turfgrass industry. Courses in this minor include golf and sports turf management, turfgrass culture, landscape and turfgrass

management, and botany.

Electives in the areas of plant diseases, weed science and soils provide a well-rounded minor for UF students.



Turfgrass Science is one of the new minors offered in the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences.



Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

The College of Agricultural and Life Sciences

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